

SENATE BILL 3939  
By Tracy

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49,  
relative to teacher licensure.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 1, is amended by adding Sections 2 through 8 of this act as a new, appropriately designated part.

SECTION 2. There is hereby created a professional standards commission to work under the oversight of the state board of education. The professional standards commission shall assume all duties and responsibilities of the state board of education or the commissioner or department of education with respect to the licensure of public school teachers. Any reference in Tennessee Code Annotated to duties or functions to be performed by the state board of education or the commissioner or the department of education with respect to the licensure of public school teachers shall be deemed to be a reference to the professional standards commission.

SECTION 3.

(a) The members of the professional standards commission shall be appointed by the governor with approval of the state board of education.

(b) The professional standards commission shall consist of a total of seventeen (17) members as follows:

(1) Six (6) licensed teachers, with at least one (1) teacher from each grand division of the state and at least one (1) teacher from each of the primary, middle and secondary grade levels. One (1) of the six (6) teachers shall be nominated by the Tennessee Education Association;

(2) Three (3) licensed principals. One (1) of the three (3) principals shall be nominated by the Tennessee Association of School Supervision and Administration;

(3) One (1) director of schools, who shall be nominated by the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents;

(4) One (1) human resources director of an LEA;

(5) One (1) supervisor;

(6) Three (3) persons from institutions of higher education that prepare teachers for licensure. One (1) of the three persons shall be nominated by the Tennessee Association of Colleges for Teacher Education;

(7) The commissioner of education, ex-officio, or the commissioner's designee; and

(8) The executive director of the state board of education, ex-officio, or the executive director's designee.

SECTION 4. A deputy executive director of the state board of education shall be appointed by the executive director of the state board of education as the chief administrative officer of the professional standards commission. Such person shall be qualified by training and experience to assist the professional standards commission in its duties with respect to the licensure of public school teachers. The deputy executive director shall report directly to the executive director of the state board of education. The powers and duties of the deputy executive director shall include, but not be limited to:

(1) Keeping written minutes of all meetings of the professional standards commission;

(2) Overseeing and administering licensure of teachers as directed by the professional standards commission;

(3) Conducting preliminary hearings and making investigations for the appeals council regarding any appeals from licensure decisions made by the professional standards commission;

(4) Preparing an annual report, approved by the professional standards commission and the state board of education, which shall be made available to the general assembly with appropriate information regarding teacher licensure, placement, employment and attrition; and

(5) Studying and reporting to the professional standards commission on the licensure of teachers in other states.

SECTION 5. The deputy executive director, with the approval of the state board of education, may employ personnel, either part-time or full-time, to assist in carrying out the provisions of this act or other duties that are assigned to the professional standards commission by law.

SECTION 6. There is hereby created an appeals council to hear appeals of individuals from licensure decisions of the professional standards commission. The state board of education shall appoint the appeals council.

SECTION 7. The fee for issuance of an initial teaching license in this state shall be two hundred dollars (\$200). The fee for the renewal of a teaching license shall be fifty dollars (\$50.00).

SECTION 8. The professional standards commission is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations to effectuate the purposes of this act. All such rules and regulations shall be promulgated in accordance with the provisions of Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 4, Chapter 5.

SECTION 9. For the purposes of creation, organization and beginning operations of the professional standards commission and the appeals council, this act shall take effect upon

becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it. For the purposes of the professional standards commission assuming responsibility for the issuance of licenses and making other decisions concerning licensure of teachers and for the purposes of the appeals council hearing appeals from decisions of the professional standards commission, this act shall take effect July 1, 2007, the public welfare requiring it. Section 7 of this act shall take effect July 1, 2007, the public welfare requiring it.